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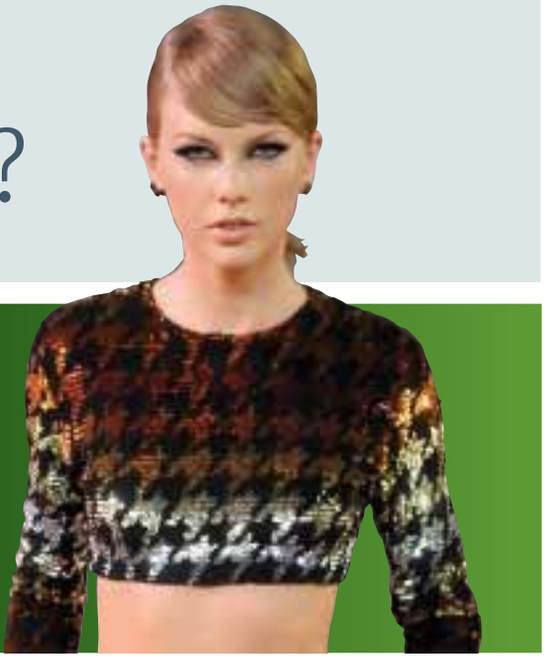
WAIT, SOMEONE SAID ‘NO’ TO TAYLOR SWIFT?

NOT EVERYONE WANTS TO BE A PART OF HER SQUAD. PAGE 17



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¡Viva Vendy Plaza!

Good eats. A popular summer street food spot — dubbed Vendy Plaza — at Park Avenue and East 116th Street will remain open until Nov. 1 instead of closing next week.

PAGE 02

People gather at “La Marqueta,” where local vendors serve up a variety of foods and beverages. / MILES DIXON, METRO

Get tickets to see the Pope’s CPW motorcade

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Move over Statham, Ed Skrein is driving

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Giants content to mix and match RBs

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1 NEWS

Top 3

The best of Metro.us

1 'Meet a seminarian: Why one New Yorker decided to leave secular life behind and become a priest'

2 'One year in, Brooklyn's Morbid Anatomy Museum still celebrates visitors' curiosity'

3 'PHOTOS: Philly Naked Bike Ride 2015 (NSFW)'

On the go

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Street food plaza in East Harlem revives historic La Marqueta

Comidas. Vendy Plaza is extended through the fall as visitors and locals continue flocking to El Barrio market.

The summer food market that's helped spice up an East Harlem plaza struggling to recapture its former glory just received an extension.

Vendy Plaza in El Barrio's La Marqueta space was scheduled to close on Sept. 9 but got a reprieve from local leaders and officials and will now stay open every Sunday through Nov. 1.

"It's been nothing short of a success," said Vendy Plaza manager Cesar Fuentes.

Fuentes — who hails from a street vending family and grew up selling Salvadorian pupusas — works the weekly, daylong event that officials said has already drawn as many as 22,500 locals and tourists to the stretch of open-air space at Park Avenue and 116th Street.

The city reports about 61 vendors so far — including the popular Lechonera La Piraña cart that consistently sells out of its Puerto Rican-style roast pork dish — are mostly minority- and women-owned businesses and most of which are based in Manhattan.

Vendy Plaza was the newest attempt to revitalize La Marqueta, a historically Latino economic hub that decades ago drew hundreds of vendors and thousands of local shoppers walking between 111th and 116th streets for anything from socks to fish to electronics.

The initiative behind Vendy Plaza was the end result collaboration between the Vendy Awards, the city's Economic Development Corporation and City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, who has represented El Barrio for the last decade.

"I've been dying for years and pushed hard to allow the community to reclaim the space," Mark-Viverito told Metro of La Marqueta. "It took a lot to get to the point we're at."

That work includes several less-than-successful attempts at bringing in business owners to empty retail spaces inside La Marqueta — spaces that the speaker said three Vendy Plaza vendors are hoping to occupy soon.

Fuentes said the project remains very conscious of the space's diverse history, and that it seeks to bring back the glory days in a modern form.

"To many longtime residents it's almost like a mecca," Fuentes said. "So we're trying to do our part to bring about a renaissance for La Marqueta."

People gather along Park Avenue and 116th Street at Vendy Plaza at La Marqueta where local venders serve up a variety of foods and beverages. / MILES DIXON, METRO

Quoted

"I've been dying for years and pushed hard to allow the community to reclaim the space."
Mark-Viverito

Part of that work includes reaching out to more vendors to add to its roster. In the year since its trial run in 2014, officials have already reported a 300 percent growth in vendor interest.

Mark-Viverito added that talks with the EDC are already in progress about how to sustain the energy kicked off by Vendy Plaza and other programming at La Marqueta throughout the week.

"Dealing with any city agency can always be difficult," she said. "But there's an openness now."

EDC President Maria Torres-Springer said the agency was just as excited as everyone else to keep Vendy Plaza at La Marqueta through the fall, calling it a "neighborhood asset," in a statement to Metro.

For now, though, Fuentes is focused on another two month's worth of fresh food and live music atop a little slice of New York City history. He's sure people will keep stopping by.

"At this point, Vendy Plaza's already has its own magnetism," he said.

CHESTER SORIA
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NYPD. 2015 safest NYC summer in 25 years, Bratton says

Bratton / GETTY IMAGES

New York City's top cop went on cable news Tuesday and declared reports about the city's spiking crime rates were overstated.

"This was the safest summer we've had in 25 years in terms of shootings and murders," NYPD Commissioner Bill Bratton said on MSNBC's "Morning Joe" show.

Bratton said he would provide more numbers on Wednesday, but previewed combined numbers for June, July and August that show the lowest drop in shootings and murders since 1990 — the year Bratton became the NYPD's transit police chief.

Bratton also defended Mayor Bill de Blasio from insinuations made by longshot GOP presidential candidate and former New York Gov. George Pataki that the officers were being held back from enforcement by the administration. Specifically on quality-of-life issues and homelessness, Bratton said the NYPD recently broke up 50 encampments, and also acknowledged that the problem has been growing gradually.

"It's been a steadily increasing problem that reached a point where it tipped," Bratton said, "where people all of a sudden looked around and said, 'Geez, where did they all come from?'"

Last week, an NYPD official tweeted that crime was down more than 4 percent year to date. CHESTER SORIA

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Special delivery

Baby born in backseat of Uber car

A baby girl was delivered in the back of an Uber car after exiting the Lincoln Tunnel on Monday evening, authorities and the company said.

A 32-year-old woman delivered a baby girl around 5:15 p.m. on Monday with help from her Uber driver, Erick Rodriguez, and the Port Authority police and responding EMTs.

Rodriguez flagged down the officers, telling them he had a woman in labor in his car who "couldn't wait," the Associated Press reported.

The ride-share company said in a statement they're rewarding Rodriguez with tickets toa Yankees game and a "deep clean for his vehicle." The company said they plan to give the family a ride home to Hoboken and a onesie for the baby girl.

WENDY JOAN BIDDLECOMBE

Tickets available to see pope ride down Central Park West

Papal visit. New Yorkers can enter a giveaway to win no more than two tickets for the procession on Sept. 25.

Pope Francis / GETTY IMAGES

Central Park's horse carriages will soon have to make room for the popemobile.

The de Blasio administration confirmed Tuesday morning that Pope Francis will make an excursion through Central Park ahead of his Friday Mass at Madison Square Garden later this month.

"The procession through Central Park will give thousands of New Yorkers an opportunity to come face to face with Pope Francis," Mayor Bill de Blasio said in a statement.

New Yorkers interested in catching a glimpse of the pope can enter a giveaway to win no more than two tickets for the procession on Sept. 25. Tickets can be requested by visiting NYC.gov/papalvisit or by calling 311 between Sept. 3 and Sept. 7.

The mayor's office said there were "tens of thousands" of tickets available to see the pope as his motorcade will proceed down Central Park West from 72nd Street to 60th Street.

Winners will get a heads up about the tickets by Sept. 10. City Hall did not confirm how many tickets were available by Tuesday morning.

"We're proud to welcome one of the world's most powerful voices to our great city next month," de Blasio added, "and we are grateful to the archdiocese for their cooperation in giving even more New Yorkers a chance to join in this historic visit."

Pope Francis' itinerary already includes addressing a crowd at the 9/11 Museum & Memorial, visiting an East Harlem school and speaking to the United Nations general assembly during his visit to New York.

Quoted

"The procession through Central Park will give thousands of New Yorkers an opportunity to come face to face with Pope Francis."

De Blasio

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On the lam

NYPD nabs escapee

It took a little over 24 hours, but officers apprehended the 23-year-old woman who broke free from her handcuffs this past the weekend.

Officials refused to provide details about how cops tracked down and again arrested Tiffany Neumann at around 8:45 a.m. Tuesday in the Upper West Side, across the island from where she escaped custody two nights earlier.

Tiffany Neumann escaped from NYPD custody. / NYPD

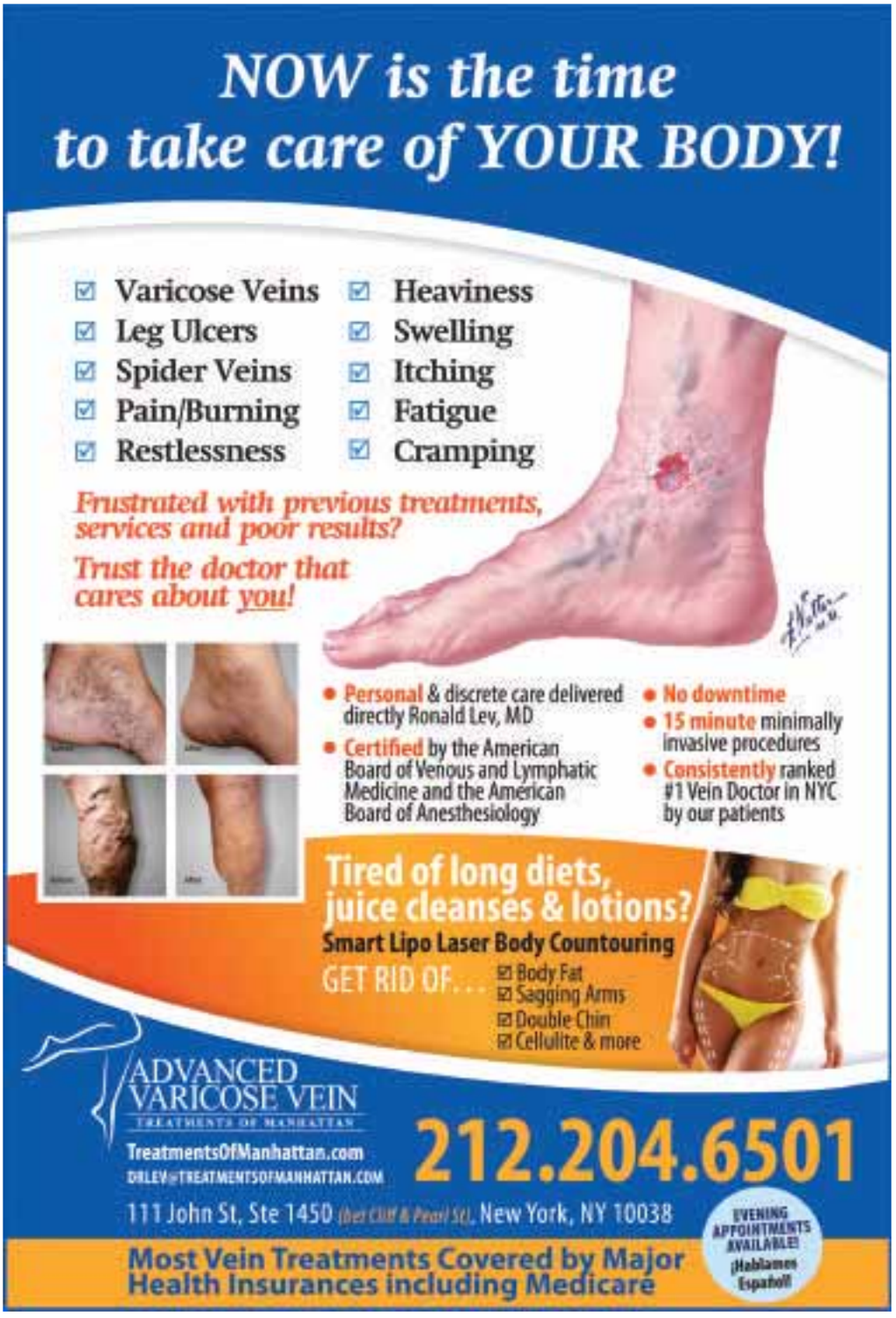
Authorities said charges related to Neumann's breakout were pending. She already faced petty larceny charges for allegedly dining and dashing on Aug. 29.

Neumann had been in central booking the following day when police said she complained about pain and that she was pregnant. She was gone by about 9 p.m. Sunday night, having jimmied her way out of the handcuffs and escaping on foot.

It remains unclear whether Neumann is actually pregnant.

CHESTER SORIA

Local college students and faculty stage a protest Tuesday in Washington Square Park. / MILES DIXON, METRO



More than 100 people protest NYU expansion

Gentrification. "NYU is the evil empire," said one Village resident.

Over 100 people gathered at Washington Square Park on Tuesday to protest NYU's expansion plan and also ask for financial accountability from the university.

Student and faculty groups from NYU, Cooper Union and the New School united with Greenwich Village neighborhood organizations to demand a stop to the constant real estate changes in the area.

"We're asking that they not demolish Coles Sports Center until they have an adequate replacement space," said Mark Crispin Miller, an NYU professor. "Over 3,000 people use that space. The population is already badly stressed and they need a resource like that."

The groups are demanding that NYU release a report with a list of buildings they own, rent and control citywide. According to Miller, 39 departments at NYU passed a resolution that opposed the plans but were ignored.

Support has poured in from local labor unions and elected officials who feel NYU's plan will only add to student debt. They blame the city's administration for allowing it to continue.

Mark Crispin Miller, a professor of media studies at NYU

By the numbers

$6B

The NYU 2031 expansion plan is a $6 billion project.

1.9M

The expansion plan will cover 1.9 million square feet (roughly two blocks) in the Village.

"NYU is the evil empire," said Susan Goren, 61, who has lived in the neighborhood for 50 years. "Thousands of people used to come to the park here [Washington Square] just to spend a nice time. Now the biggest event in the park is orientation day for NYU. The zoning has destroyed the park and gutted it for the students. It's NYU-ville."

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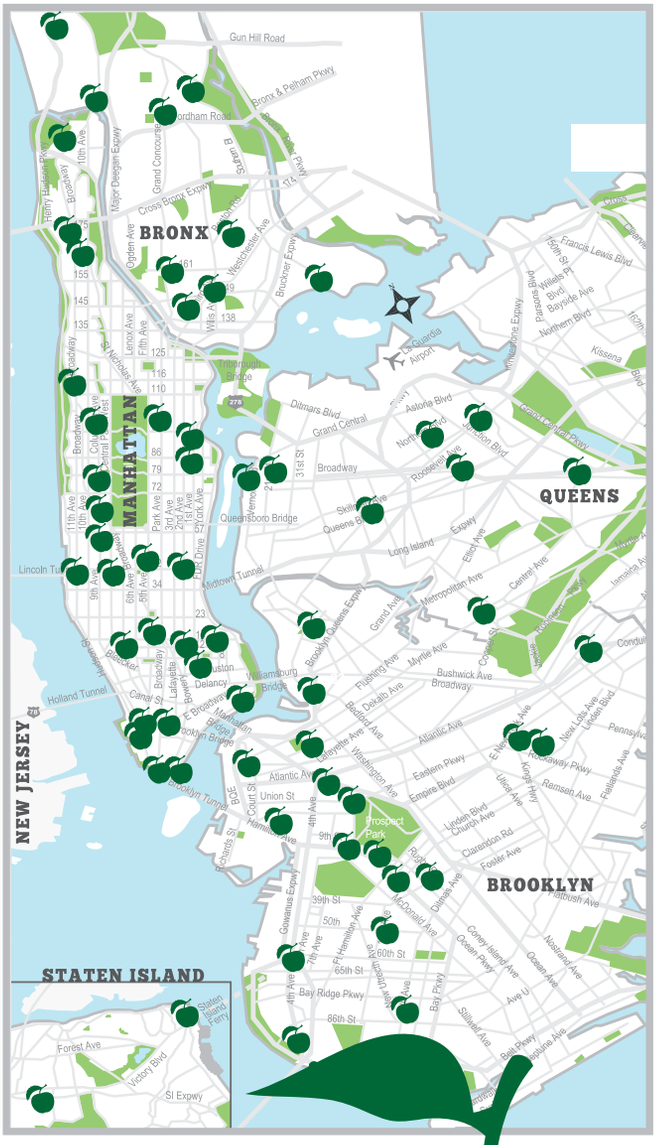

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Chase

One juvenile dead, five arrested after New Jersey carjacking

A juvenile suspected of helping carjack a Jaguar sedan was struck and killed by a police vehicle and five other suspects were under arrest following a car chase and standoff in Newark, New Jersey, on Tuesday, officials said.

The six juveniles, who police linked to a shooting and robberies in the area on Tuesday morning, led police on a chase in the silver luxury car after officers tried to pull them over, according to Katherine Carter, spokeswoman for the Essex County Prosecutor's Office.

When they finally came to a stop in a residential Newark neighborhood, three of the suspects surrendered. One was struck by a police car and pronounced dead at the scene. Two fled into a nearby home, barricading themselves inside.

They emerged with their hands up after the Newark police SWAT team arrived. The incident ended around 9 a.m., Carter said.

No other information was released by the police about the suspects was available.

It was unknown if anyone else was injured during those incidents.

An Essex County Prosecutor's Office Professional Standards Bureau investigation into the death of the suspect struck by a Newark police vehicle is in its early stages, officials said. REUTERS

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NJ kids forced into fight club at day care, workers fired

Lightbridge Academy in Cranford / GOOGLE MAPS

On video. About a dozen young boys and girls can be seen shoving each other to the ground.

Two former employees at a New Jersey day care center are accused of encouraging fights among young children, calling it a "fight club" and recording the clashes on video, prosecutors said on Tuesday.

Erica Kenny, 22, of Cranford, New Jersey, and Chanese White, 28, of Roselle, New Jersey, were both charged with fourth-degree child abuse following an investigation by the Union County prosecutor's Special Victims Unit.

The two instigated fights among children, aged 4 to 6, at the Lightbridge Academy in Cranford on at least one day in August, according to a statement from Union County Prosecutor Grace Park.

"While no children were physically harmed during this incident, we have a zero tolerance policy for anyone who acts in conflict with the core value of Lightbridge Academy — the safety and well being of children," Brenda Febbo, a spokeswoman for Lightbridge Academy, said in a statement.

"As parents and caregivers, we are shocked and saddened by this isolated incident," she said, adding that Kenny and White have been fired.

Kenny was also charged with third-degree endangerment of the welfare of a child. She is accused of recording the fights on her cell phone and sharing the video clips with friends on Snapchat, prosecutors said.

Kenny and White are expected to appear in court for the first time on Friday.

Convictions on third-degree criminal charges can result in prison sentences of up to five years, while fourth-degree crimes carry a sentence of up to 18 months. REUTERS

Lawsuit over employment

Uber drivers granted class action status

Uber drivers are entitled to class action status in litigation over whether they are independent contractors or employees, a U.S. judge ruled on Tuesday, in a case that could have wide implications for the sharing economy.

Three drivers sued Uber in a federal court in San Francisco, contending they are employees and entitled to reimbursement for expenses, including gas and vehicle maintenance. The drivers currently pay those costs themselves. REUTERS

7 LINE NEWS

September 2015 - Three of Eight

GO FROM CONVENTION CENTER TO CENTER FIELD.

The 7 Line Station at 34th St – Hudson Yards will link to 18 subway lines. Riders will be able to take the 7 line from the Javits Center and the far West Side's High Line, Hudson River Park and ferries, connecting with commuter rail service in between, or for a game of baseball in Flushing Meadows.
Opening September 13, 2015.

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Four things you need to know

1 Obama pushes for more US ice-breaking might in Arctic

President Barack Obama proposed a faster timetable for buying a new heavy ice-breaker for the U.S. Arctic, where quickly melting sea ice has spurred more maritime traffic and the United States has fallen far behind Russian resources.

The move, part of a push to convince Americans to support Obama's plans to curb climate change, has long been urged by Arctic advocates as climate change opens up the region to more shipping, mining and drilling.

The announcement came as Obama heads to the coastal town of Seward, named after Secretary of State William Seward, who negotiated the purchase of Alaska in 1867 from Russia.

In the first step of Obama's new timetable, the government would buy a heavy icebreaker by 2020 instead of the previous goal of 2022. The United States used to have seven icebreakers, but the fleet has dwindled to three creaky vessels, only one of which is a heavy-duty vessel, the White House said.

"Russia, on the other hand, has 40 icebreakers and another 11 planned or under construction," the White House said.

Obama will have to convince Congress to pick up the tab for any new icebreakers, each of which comes with a price tag of about $1 billion. REUTERS

USCG POLAR STAR

2 Pope to allow priests to forgive abortion in Holy Year

Pope Francis will give all priests discretion during the Roman Catholic Church's upcoming Holy Year to formally forgive women who have had abortions.

In Church teaching, abortion is such a grave sin that those who procure or perform it incur an automatic excommunication, which can only be lifted by designated church officials.

However, from Dec. 8 to Nov. 26, during an extraordinary Holy Year or "Jubilee" on the theme of mercy, all priests will be able to do so if the women repent "with a contrite heart," the pope said in a letter published by the Vatican. REUTERS

3 Google redesigns iconic logo

Google unveiled a redesign of its iconic logo, the fifth such modification since the search engine started in 1998, the company said in a blog post.

The revamped logo, displayed as a Google Doodle on its home page, spells 'Google' in a sans-serif typeface, similar to the one being used by Google's newly created holding company, Alphabet.

The compact version of the logo, used to identify most of its apps, bids farewell to the little blue "g" icon and replaces it with a uppercase "G" colored in blue, red, yellow and green to match the full logo. REUTERS

4 Clerk defies court, denies gay marriage licenses

A Kentucky county clerk, defying a new U.S. Supreme Court decision and citing "God's authority," rejected requests for marriage licenses from same-sex couples.

Citing her religious objections, Rowan County Clerk Kim Davis has refused to issue any marriage licenses since the Supreme Court in June ruled that same-sex couples have the right to marry under the U.S. Constitution.

The court rejected Davis' request for an emergency order allowing her to deny marriage licenses to same-sex couples while she appeals a federal judge's order requiring her to issue them. REUTERS

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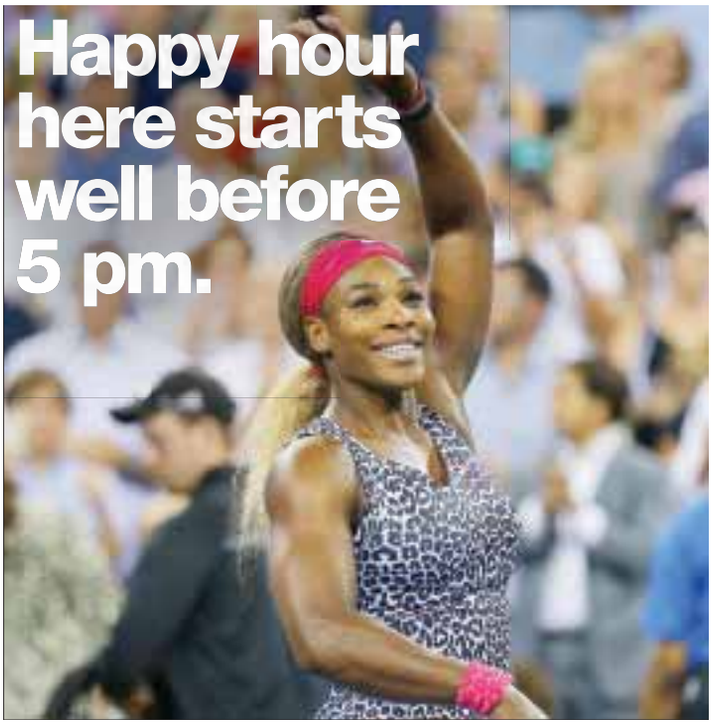

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Police officers search an area for three suspects involved in shooting an officer in Fox Lake, Illinois. / GETTY IMAGES

Police in Illinois hunt for suspects in killing of veteran officer

Officer shot.
Police say three men are involved.

More than 100 police officers using aircraft and canine units were searching northern Illinois on Tuesday afternoon for three suspects believed to be involved in the fatal shooting of a 30-year veteran police officer, officials said.

Fox Lake Police Lieutenant Charles Joseph Gliniewicz was found wounded on Tuesday morning after reporting that he was pursuing three suspects on foot, the Lake County Sheriff's Office said. He later died.

Officials have only described the three suspects as two white males and one black male. None were in custody as of Tuesday evening, Lake County Sheriff's Office spokesman Christopher Covelli said.

The shooting came days after a county deputy sheriff in Texas was killed in a hail of gunfire while refueling a patrol car at a gas station.

A suspect in the Friday shooting was captured and has been charged with capital murder.

"Today, not only did Fox Lake lose a family member, I lost a very dear friend," Fox Lake Mayor Donny Schmit told a news conference.

Gliniewicz, a father of four boys and a decorated officer, was known around the village as "G.I. Joe" and dedicated to Fox Lake and his fellow officers, Schmit said.

Police with dogs and helicopters continued to search woods and swampy areas after three suspects fled the scene where Gliniewicz was shot.

On Tuesday evening, a group of officers formed a line and disappeared into dense trees and brush in a search for the suspects as bystanders watched across a busy road.

"I've lived here for 30 years and never had to lock my door until now," said Dan Christensen, 64, as a police helicopter circled above a nearby wooded area.

The suspects were on foot when the officer initially made contact with them, and they stole his firearm and other gear before fleeing, media reports said.

Covelli said local residents should remain indoors and report suspicious activity.

REUTERS

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TODAY!

Anthony Horowitz calls Idris Elba too 'street' to be Bond

Social media.
Fans of Idris Elba are taking to Facebook and Twitter to voice their outrage against the comment.

Idris Elba / GETTY IMAGES

Quoted

"For me, Idris Elba is a bit too rough to play the part. It's not a color issue. I think he is probably a bit too 'street' for Bond. Is it a question of being suave? Yeah."
Horowitz

Anthony Horowitz, the guy who's now in charge of writing James Bond fiction, has called black actor Idris Elba "a bit too street" to play 007.

Fans of Elba, the British actor who has played Shakespearean roles and won accolades for portraying Nelson Mandela, are besides themselves.

Horowitz is the social media public enemy of the day for his brow-raising comments in The Daily Mail.

"So Anthony Horowitz thinks Idris Elba is too 'street' to play Bond. I see your coded racism am calling it," tweeted @ephemeragrrl.

Horowitz picked apart Elba's qualifications to succeed actor Daniel Craig in the next movie. Elba is considered a front-runner for the role, and Bond fans are openly calling for him to get it.

"Idris Elba is a terrific actor, but I can think of other black actors who would do it better," said Horowitz, who cited Adrian Lester as one of them.

Horowitz's first Bond novel, "Trigger Mortis," is out this month. **REUTERS**

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Summer Games. Los Angeles votes to pursue hosting 2024 Olympics

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, center, celebrates with Los Angeles City Councilmen Joe Buscaino, left, and Marqueece Harris-Dawson after the council voted to bid for the 2024 Summer Olympics, at City Hall in Los Angeles. / GETTY IMAGES

The Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously on Tuesday to pursue a bid to bring the Summer Games to town in 2024 and become the only city besides London ever to host the Olympics three times.

The resolution adopted by the council allows for the city to negotiate a financial agreement with Olympic officials once Los Angeles is officially proposed as the American host city for the games.

Mayor Eric Garcetti is solidly behind the campaign to host the 2024 Olympics, as is most of the city's business establishment, though some council members had raised concerns that Los Angeles could be on the hook for costs that exceed revenues.

Los Angeles has found itself the most talked-about U.S. candidate city for the 2024 Summer Olympics — Rio de Janeiro hosts next year and Tokyo in 2020 — after officials in Boston took the Massachusetts capital out of contention.

Boston's mayor said he did not want to expose municipal taxpayers to the potential tab for mammoth cost overruns the games have left other host cities.

Los Angeles represents a possibly thrifty choice, in large part because officials say most prospective event venues for the games already exist, including Memorial Coliseum.

The city and the coliseum previously played host to the Summer Games in 1932 and 1984. London in 2012 became the only metropolis to host the games three times. REUTERS

Old coliseum

101

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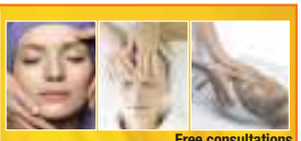

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1 About that time Taylor Swift had Ian McKellen evicted

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While Ian McKellen's BFF, Patrick Stewart, might have been thrilled at the prospect of joining the ever-ballooning ranks of Taylor Swift's squad, McKellen himself is in no rush. In fact, he even turned down Swift's invitation to make a cameo at one of her recent L.A. gigs. Saying no to Swift? Apparently, it's possible.

So why did the "X-Men" and "Lord of the Rings" star decline the offer? It turns out the two have a bit of a history. "When I was living in Peter Jackson's apartment in New York, Taylor Swift bought it while I was there and I was thrown out before I wanted to leave. That hardly puts me in Taylor Swift's team, does it?" McKellen reveals to Gay Star News. "She bought it, she had every right to. I was just lodging there for free. She did ask me to appear with Patrick Stewart at her show in L.A., but I had something else to do that night." That is some impressive shade, sir.

3 Lauren Conrad OK with being basic now

Good news, everyone. Former "The Hills" star Lauren Conrad has come to terms with her basicness. Last year, Allure dubbed her as such, prompting Conrad to chafe at the signifier on Twitter. Apparently, she's reconsidered. "I'm probably pretty basic," she tells Cosmo in the magazine's cover story on her. "But I'm also a pretty happy person, so that's OK with me." Well, good. None of this, however, answers the question of why Conrad is getting a Cosmo cover to begin with, but some of life's mysteries will never be solved, I suppose.

THE WORD

Ned Ehrbar takes on the world of gossip.

NED EHRBAR
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Daily video

If Harry Potter were the Villain

Who doesn't love a good trailer re-cut? In the spirit of that classic that turns "The Shining" into a lighthearted comedy, we give you "Harry Potter: The Boy Who Kills." It turns out there's plenty of ammunition to reframe J.K. Rowling's series in a way that suggests young Harry is the real bad guy — and a supercreepy one, at that. It's all in how you look at things, right?

BLOODBLITZ COMEDY, YOUTUBE

2 Andrew Garfield on Spider-Man: 'Like a prison'

Andrew Garfield has had a lot of time to think about his time playing Spider-Man for two films before Sony's recent decision to once again reboot the franchise, and his thoughts have not been pleasant. "[The films are] mass-marketed. Like, 'We want 50-year-old white men to love it, gay teenagers to love it, bigot homophobes in Middle America to love it, 11-year-old girls to love it.' That's canning Coke. So that was a bummer," Garfield tells the Playlist. "I understand people want to make a lot of money, and they're going to spend a lot of money so the playpen can be as big as it was. I can't live that way. It sounds like a prison, to be honest, living within those expectations." Yikes.

2 CULTURE

Twitter feed

Today, Lorde seems a little excited, Azealia Banks has new career goals, Tom Arnold needs help, Lena Dunham may steal this for "Girls" and Bob Saget is making up quotes.

@lordemusic: PYROMANIAC

@AZEALIABANKS: Low key wanna be a casting director

@TomArnold: If you already know the answer ("tired and nauseous") do you still have to ask your pregnant wife how she feels? Asking for a friend.

@lenadunham: Cool diss: "Like I'd waste my one clean pair of underwear on THIS!"

@bobsaget: Women. They are a complete mystery. ~ Stephen Hawking

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Meet the new Transporter

Film. "The Transporter Refueled" star Ed Skrein teaches us about Resting Sociopath Face.

Skrein, right, takes Loan Chabanol for a ride in "The Transporter Refueled," out Friday. / EUROPACORP

Ed Skrein swears he's a nice guy, despite appearances. The British actor and rapper steps in for Jason Statham in "The Transporter Refueled," the fourth film in the fast-driving franchise, and he'll soon be seen in the dark comedy "Kill Your Friends" and doing battle with Ryan Reynolds in "Deadpool" as the villain Ajax. But for all the violence and mayhem he gets up to at work, Skrein insists he's a teddy bear at heart.

Did you watch the previous films to prepare?
I did. I'd never seen them before, and it was so important for me to watch them, to know what the fans expected and what had come previously. I think it would be ignorant of me to have not. And after that it was important for me to just move on and focus on my own approach.

These films, the making of them, are so technically specific.
It's fascinating, and it's why I love my job. I finished "The Transporter," and a week later I went onto a Danish independent movie, which I think the budget was 3 million euros and we had a crew of 26 people. We shot it all Dogme-style — very little makeup, very little lighting, one camera — and it was fascinating to see the difference in approach. For me, that's the blueprint going forward, and that's the joy of this craft, to be able to have the yin and the yang and to balance between the two.

You're also in the darkly comic "Kill Your Friends," which debuts at the Toronto Film Festival.
It's an incredible book. Quintessentially dark, British humor. I would've cleaned the toilets on set, I was so excited to be a part of it. Also, it's a different role for me. A lot of the stuff that I've done has been pretty heavy, pretty dark. People tend to gravitate towards me when they want dark stuff. I can't think why. Even when I do comedy, I do it dark like "Deadpool" and "Kill Your Friends."

If you were to speculate as to why people think of you for these darker things ...
I think my bone structure suggests that I am a violent person. [Laughs] But in real life I'm a teddy bear. I'm a pacifist in every sense. I think even when I do a neutral face I look like I'm going to stab you in the eye. [Laughs] Darkness is something that I enjoy exploring in cinema because I don't have darkness in my life. My life is very light and just about my family, very calm and ordinary. Maybe the cinema and this craft is my therapy. I get to kill people and beat people up and be immensely horrible and evil on camera and live my days nine to five as a sociopath, and then I go home and I've got it out of my system.

That sounds very healthy, actually.
You should try it.

SKREIN
GETTY IMAGES

One more thing

When you're stepping into a franchise role like this, what sort of hesitations or trepidations go along with that?

That doesn't play into it for me. It isn't really a factor, you know? And when taking on a role like this, I have the same preparation I would have normally taking on a small European independent movie with a character that's never been played by anyone else. You find the character, you find the wiring and you work out how they make decisions. You sort of find their shoes and get comfortable in them.

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ON THE SEXIST 'STAR WARS' ARMOR COMMENT

Geek Girl in Hollywood

JENNA BUSCH

JENNA BUSCH TAKES ON THE WAY POP CULTURE SNUBS ITS FEMALE FANS. FOR MORE COLUMNS, VISIT METRO.US/JENNA-BUSCH AS WELL AS HER SITE, LEGION OF LEIA (WWW.LEGIONOFLEIA.COM)

Here's a picture of Captain Phasma from "Star Wars: The Force Awakens." Pop quiz: Is it a he or a she? Or is it a trick question and the gender doesn't matter because, you know, it's armor? / LUCASFILM

Let's talk about boob armor. You know, the suits of armor that have clearly defined spaces for breasts. Why? This past week, the official "Star Wars" Facebook page posted a picture of some really cool Captain Phasma fan art, for the Stormtrooper played by "Game of Thrones" star Gwendoline Christie.

One of the comments on the pic, which has since been deleted, said, "Not to be sexist, but it's really hard to tell that's female armor for me." The official account replied, "It's armor. On a woman. It doesn't have to look feminine." (I can almost hear thousands of women yelling "Thank you!" over the Internet.)

First of all, starting a sentence with "Not to be sexist, but" pretty much guarantees someone is going to be pissed at whatever you're about to say. Second, it's not the job of armor to indicate sex. It's there to protect you. Why does it matter that you can tell if Captain Phasma is a woman? Does not having an indication of breasts affect her character?

The other thing is boob armor would likely injure you terribly or kill you. You would likely not see a suggestion of breasts after all the padding was put on you. If you decided to use them for aesthetics, molded cups would be like a knife in the chest if you fell forward or were hit in the chest.

There are plenty of places a film, game or TV show can indicate gender. There are plenty of reasons and places for things like bikini tops, and none of them are fighting in a desert like Quiet in "Metal Gear Solid." Princess Leia's outfit in Jabba's palace made sense in the story and the setting. Making sure some guy on the Internet was absolutely sure Captain Phasma is a woman because of curvy lines in a costume that is meant to protect is just ridiculous. Thank you, "Star Wars" social media person, for having had enough of this stuff as well.

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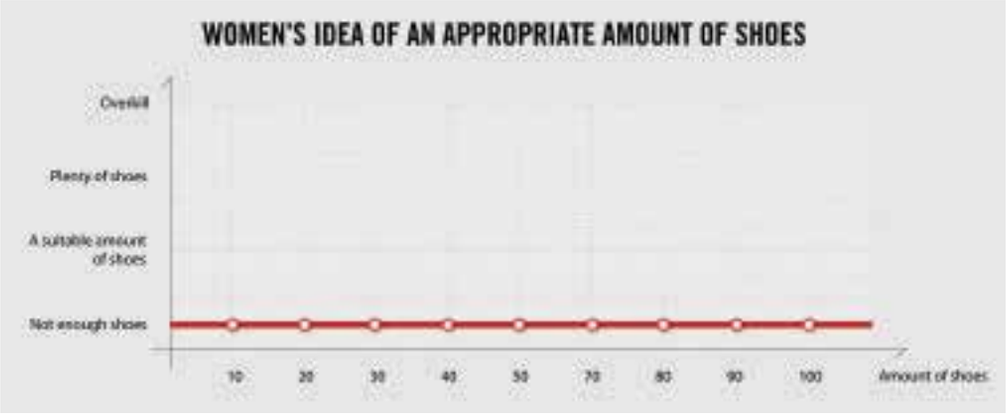

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Aries Everyone around you will have trouble keeping up with you. You will be the center of attention no matter where you go or what you do.

Taurus Remember to be tactful when dealing with others. You are bound to ruffle some feathers if you don't choose your words wisely.

Gemini Widen your circle of friends and associates. Getting involved in a progressive group will lead to lifelong friendships that offer opportunities.

Cancer You will be tempted to intrude on someone else's business or personal affairs. Stand back and let others do as they please.

Leo Revitalize your mind by beginning a new course. Satisfy your thirst for knowledge by choosing a subject close to your heart.

Virgo A look at your assets will lead to an investment opportunity. Act quickly once the facts indicate a favorable venture. Host a party.

Libra Romance and passion will be front and center, making this an ideal day to look for love or to nurture an existing relationship.

Scorpio Mixing business with pleasure will not work in your favor. Thrust yourself into the forefront at the workplace and gain recognition.

Sagittarius Your creative talent will shine through and draw a crowd. Attend events, and your contributions will be welcomed.

Capricorn Keep your emotions out of the equation. The current change unfolding in your life will turn out better than anticipated.

Aquarius Don't let upsetting personal issues get you down. If you open up and share your experiences, you will receive support from a friend.

Pisces Raising your income should be on your mind. You must remain realistic. Efficient planning will help reduce expenditures. **EUGENIA LAST**

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easy

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hard

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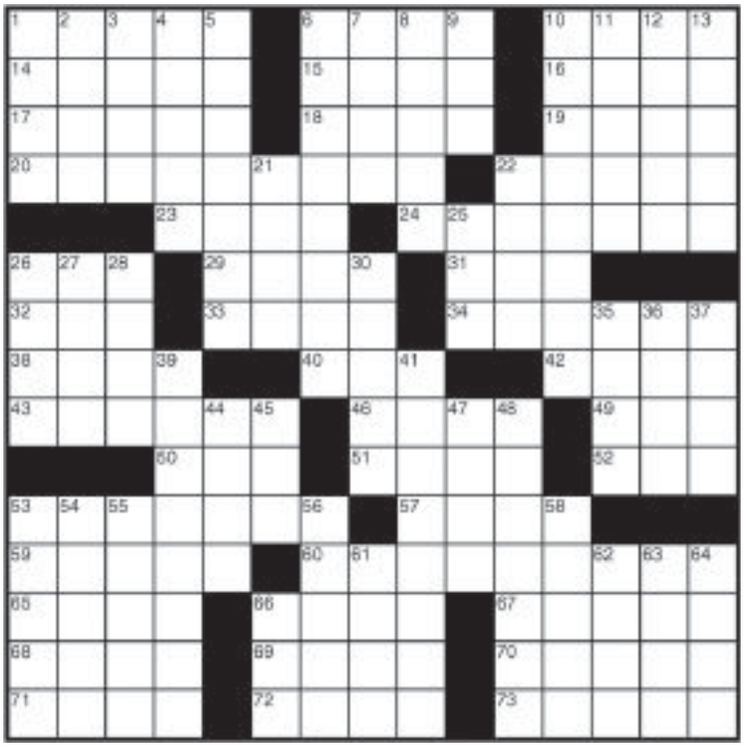

Across
1 Horizon, maybe
6 Pedro's coin
10 NYC art center
14 It quakes in the Rockies
15 Roman or Buzzi
16 Gen. — Halftrack
17 Intended
18 Pupil's place
19 Hung on to
20 Bright orange fruit
22 Alpine peak
23 Aquarius' tote
24 Violent weather
26 Wimple sporter
29 All excited
31 Fashion accessory
32 Ending for depart
33 Reckless
34 Meager
38 Pack down
40 Immeasurable time
42 Poi base
43 Bad posture
46 Recipe direction
49 Holiday cheer
50 Elegant accessory
51 Ski lift (hyph.)
52 Roman teenager's age
53 Clears, as a drain
57 Favoritism
59 Like a pitcher's dream game (hyph.)
60 Future frogs
65 Paris cop
66 Horrid-tasting
67 Lint collector
68 Long-active volcano
69 Cato's road
70 "Maria —"
71 Faculty honcho
72 Monster's loch
73 Avoid expiration

Down
1 Mae West persona
2 Um-hmm (2 wds.)
3 Bandy words
4 Rigid
5 Kind of protest
6 Pale yellow
7 Drachma's successor
8 Be frugal
9 Sighs of distress
10 Achieving success (2 wds.)
11 Sweater letter
12 Had the blues
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25 Tattoo parlor sounds
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37 Jellystone bear
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44 Ducklike bird
45 Beldam
47 Go kaput
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Six easy ways to upgrade your rental

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home

Love where you live

With DIY renovation ideas from Reham Fagiri, co-founder of AptDeco, you create a space that's all your own — even if you don't actually own it.

RACHEL KASHDAN
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Just because your lease says you can't paint those white walls doesn't mean you can't upgrade the place. Don't let your rental agreement cramp your style. Reham Fagiri, co-founder of pre-owned furniture marketplace AptDeco, fills us in on all the tricks to freshen up a lived-in space without breaking the rules.

Deck out your windows

Even if you've got trendy new furniture, stunning wall art and awesome accessories, sticking with the plastic slat blinds or worn white roller shades isn't going to give you the homey feel you're going for. Instead, Fagiri suggests replacing generic blinds with colorful ones that complement your style or, alternatively, give curtains a try.

"Curtains are a great way to add coziness without spending a lot of money," she says. "You can just go to any drape store and it's less than $30 or $40 to buy brand new curtains." Her suggestion: "Long, lighter colored, white or beige flowy curtains really make a difference."

Swap out the hardware

Changing the knobs on plain, generic cabinets and drawers is one small modification that goes a long way in adding personality to your apartment.

"You can go to any hardware store and get new knobs that add a pop of color or even shine depending on your style," Fagiri says.

The expert says it only takes a couple minutes to unscrew and replace them, and it's easy to put the original knobs back on when it's time to move out.

Liven up your walls

Even if your landlord says painting your walls is a no-go, that doesn't mean you're stuck with bare white. One of Fagiri's favorite ways to spruce up walls is by hanging a cluster of framed artwork to create a focal wall.

Fagiri says that when arranging different-sized pictures on a wall, orient some horizontally and some vertically to add variety. "I love it when there's just different shapes and sizes," she says. "It just creates that illusion that it's sort of an art piece, whereas if everything is just one size it looks very organized."

She also adds that this works best if each frame is the same color so that the look stays cohesive.

The best part is that unlike spending money to paint walls, "these are things that you can take with you to your next apartment, which is great for budget saving," Fagiri says.

Don't always go for the cheap option

For furniture that you'll be using every day, Fagiri says you're better off investing in quality even if that means buying something secondhand.

"If you buy really cheap furniture that's flimsy you're going to spend, let's say, a couple hundred dollars. But you won't be able to move it because it'll break down," she explains. "If you spend a little bit more, or spend the same as you'd pay for a cheap piece of furniture [on something of quality] that's secondhand, you'll be able to take it anywhere and onto your next apartment."

There are certainly items where quality can be sacrificed, but Fagiri recommends investing in a nice bed, couch and dresser.

Amp up the lighting

The common denominator in almost all rental apartments is bad overhead lighting.

"The overhead lights are so strong that they're just not inviting," says Fagiri.

She recommends swapping out the basic flush mount light for attractive fixtures such as a chandelier or pendant light to "really bring a room together."

Another tip: Use standing or table lamps as your main light source instead. Fagiri says the light emitted from these is generally much more pleasing, plus they can be a great way to add some extra flair to your space.

Want even more control over the lighting in your apartment? Add a dimmer. "You can go to any hardware store and [buy one for] $5. Just adding that small accessory can dramatically change how the room looks," she says.

Make your radiator vanish

Nothing kills a well-designed room quite like a nasty old radiator with chipping paint, but Fagiri says it's easy to make your radiator disappear.

"There are actually places you can go to find radiator covers. Some of them are plain so it just sort of blends in with the wall, and some of them have designs on them," she says.

Radiator covers, which you can easily find at a hardware store, are safe and simply slide right on over the radiator.

Fagiri says you can also try sprucing up your radiator by giving it a fresh coat of radiator-safe paint, though you should check with your landlord first before painting.

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Giants to utilize 'running back by committee'

NFL. The Giants seem content to divide the workload between their three potent backs.

The running back position may be a bit devalued in today's pass-happy NFL, but that doesn't mean the position is obsolete.

Most teams have shunned the workhorse running back, and instead use a committee. The Giants are one of many teams that think along those same lines, which means they had to go out and build an interchangeable stable of running backs who could all do the same things, but with a little of their own flair.

Offensive coordinator Ben McAdoo has no problem mixing and matching his backs according to the situation, down and distance, and personnel. Tops on his list of priorities, though, is being able to pass-protect for quarterback Eli Manning. Of the three primary running backs — Rashad Jennings, Shane Vereen and Andre Williams — Vereen may be the best at pass protection, as well as being a great safety valve for Manning in the passing game.

Vereen, who tallied 107 catches in his four previous seasons in New England, including 11 receptions in the Patriots' Super Bowl win, already carved out his role as the third-down back. But that doesn't mean that Jennings and Williams are useless in the passing game. Jennings has proven himself a reliable target out of the backfield during his career, while Williams has been diligently working during and after practice on his screen game. Neither will match Vereen's pass-catching excellence, but when either is in the game, opposing defenses won't simply key on the run, thinking they're not a threat out of the backfield.

Backup quarterback Ryan Nassib was the Giants' leading rusher (30 yards on three carries) in their loss to the Jets, so that's a clear sign that the offensive line is still a work in progress. But if or when the reworked line gels, Big Blue will sport a sneaky-good rushing attack. All of the aforementioned are capable of finding seams and able to wiggle through small holes — although Jennings and Williams are better suited at wearing down a defensive front than Vereen.

Jennings thinks there's room for all three to effectively show their wares, adding he's also a believer that the entire offense will get on the same page in time for the opener in Dallas.

"We're showing some good things. I think we had a 14-play drive [against the Jets] that showed what we're capable of," Jennings said. "We've looked at the tape. We know where we are as an offense and a running backs' room, what we need to build off of, see what we're doing right, and mind any cleanup we need. … The biggest thing is to clean things up and take steps forward in eliminating all the self-inflicted wounds, because that can't happen."

Should the Giants' trio stay healthy, eliminate the mistakes, and see the blocking become more consistent there's a good chance that Big Blue's running backs corps could be one of the league's better trios.

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@TBone8
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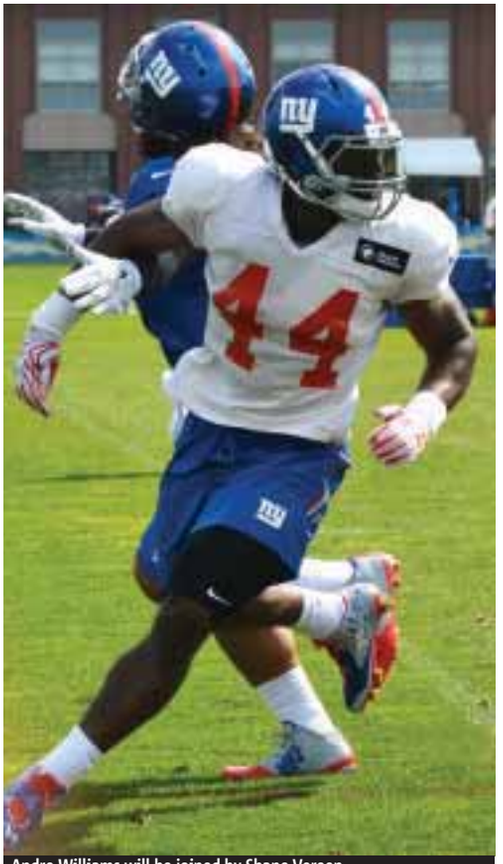
Running strong

Here's the Giants' running back situation at a glance

- **Automatics:** Rashad Jennings, Shane Vereen, Andre Williams, Henry Hynoski (fullback)
- **On the bubble:** Orleans Darkwa
- **Longshots:** Akeem Hunt, Kenneth Harper, Nikita Whitlock (fullback)



Andre Williams will be joined by Shane Vereen and Rashad Jennings at running back this season. / OLIVIA SCHMIDT

3 SPORTS

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Jets training camp

Stacy hopes to hurdle way onto Jets' roster

There's a chip on the shoulders of Zac Stacy, and for good reason: The Jets running back has plenty to prove to not only the team that drafted him then traded him but to his new organization as well.

In 2013, during his rookie season, Stacy seemed destined for a big role with the St. Louis Rams, more than justifying his selection as a fifth-round pick. Stacy ran for 973 yards along with seven touchdowns in just 13 games that season. It seemed like he was destined for a big year in 2014 but his role decreased with the Rams last year, even as he averaged the same 3.9 yards per carry as his rookie season. The amount of carries, he said, were dictated from "upstairs" and this offseason, he asked for a move out of St. Louis.

Zac Stacy / GETTY IMAGES

The Jets were able to trade a seventh-round draft selection for Stacy, adding him to an already deep backfield. There is Chris Ivory and Bilal Powell on the roster as well as Stevan Ridley, who, despite being out for all of the offseason as well as training camp, is nonetheless a talented running back. So it seemed like Stacy would, in a best-case scenario, be a good insurance policy if someone got hurt during training camp.

"The situation is obviously tough, we have so many talented backs," Stacy told Metro this week. "That's a great thing, all this competition. At the end of the day, I'm going to control the things I can control, try to make plays and have an impact and make this team.

"Absolutely, I have a chip on my shoulder. Definitely something to prove, I think that's the attitude you should have. I know I can play in this league and I think the guys upstairs do as well.

KRISTIAN DYER

Tennis. Bouchard hoping legend Connors can revive her career as US Open kicks off

Genie Bouchard knew just where to turn with her season on the brink.

The promising young Canadian tennis star put in a call to the legendary Jimmy Connors with the hopes that the five-time U.S. Open champion could help revive her stalled career.

"I've known Jimmy for a couple of years actually," the No. 25 seed said ahead of her second-round match Wednesday with Polona Hercog at the U.S. Open. "He's been a friend. He was here this week. We just decided to work together for a couple days, even though we knew he was leaving. He left [Sunday] night."

Tennis fans and reporters were abuzz on the Internet last week when pictures surfaced of the 62-year-old Connors working with the 21-year-old Bouchard at both the West Side Tennis Club and the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center.

Connors won the Open on all three surfaces — hardcourts, clay and grass — and made a memorable run to the semifinals in 1991 at age 39. He captured eight Grand Slam titles and is regarded as one of the fiercest competitors of all time.

Connors has won five U.S. Open titles. / GETTY IMAGES

Still, his coaching track record hasn't been exactly stellar. Connors previously coached Andy Roddick for almost two years and then had an ill-fated partnership with Maria Sharapova that lasted just one match in 2013.

"Working this week with Jimmy has really given me a different side of things, like, a different point of view," Bouchard said. "He's very energetic. He's kind of lifted my spirits a little bit."

It made sense for Bouchard to seek him out, even if it's not a full-fledged coaching commitment as of yet.

"I'm a good tennis player," she said. "I have the skill. I have everything I need. Just no matter what, keep working, keep my head up, keep my spirits up, keep that belief no matter what people say. It can be hard at times when you hear so many negative things."

ADAM ZAGORIA

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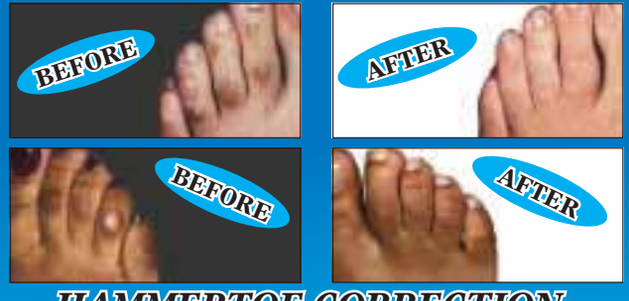

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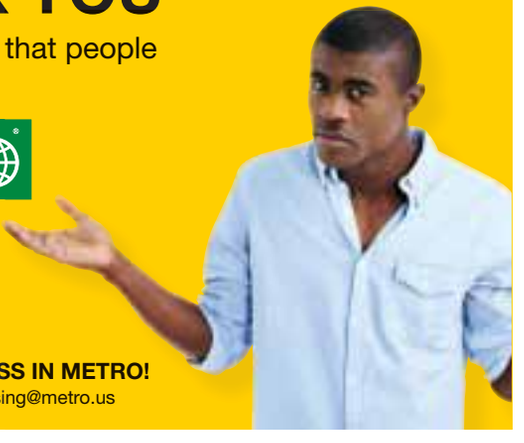

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NOTICE OF FORMATION of Dean Street Society LLC. Articles of Organization filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on July 23, 2015. Office location: New York County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: Hilary Rushford c/o Dean Street Society, 276 5th Ave., Suite 204, New York, NY 10001. Purpose: any lawful activity.

NOTICE OF FORMATION of Fortune LS LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secy. of State of New York (SSNY) on 05/20/2015. Office location: Queens County. SSNY is designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC c/o 84-19 Jamaica Ave., Woodhaven, NY 11421. Purpose: any lawful activity.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Number Pending, for Beer, Wine & Liquor has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer, Wine & Liquor at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 60-15 Main Street, Flushing, NY, for on-premises consumption. New Lake Pavilion Inc.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Serial # 1288485, for Wine & Beer has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Wine & Beer at retail under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 78 East 1st St., New York, NY 11231, New York County, for on premise consumption. Thai Thailand Home Cooking Inc.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Serial # 1288454, for Liquor, Wine & Beer has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Liquor, Wine & Beer at retail under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 338 Hamilton Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11231, Kings County, for on premise consumption. Big Pie LLC.

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Number Pending, for Beer & Wine has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer & Wine at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 107-25 Liberty Ave., Ozone Park, NY, for on-premises consumption. D Hack's Halal Inc.

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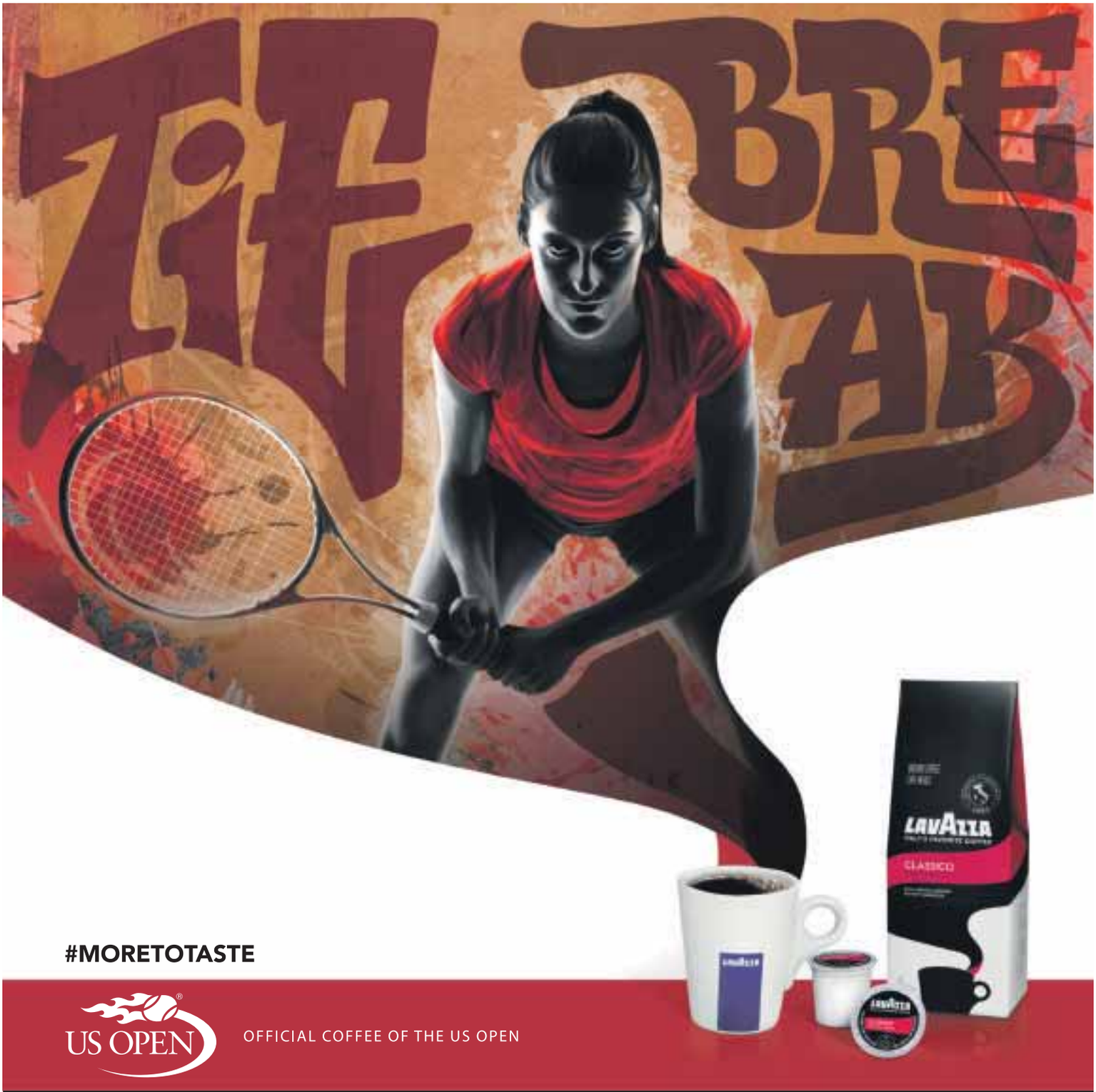

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